

	Type	L #	Hits	Search Text	DBs	Time Stamp
1	BRS	L1	31718	(manage or managed or managing or management or track or tracked or tracking or monitor or monitored or monitoring) near5 (ship or shipping or shipment or package or parcel or box or mail or letter or mail or mailpiece)	USPAT; US-PGPUB; EPO; JPO; DERWENT; IBM_TDB; USOCR	2004/03/06 14:24
2	BRS	L2	3946	1 near5 (communicate or communicated or communicating or communication or line or link or channel or lan or wan or internet or web or www or net or network)	USPAT; US-PGPUB; EPO; JPO; DERWENT; IBM_TDB; USOCR	2004/03/06 14:24
3	BRS	L3	94710	(cost or costing or price or pricing or fee or feeing or rate or rating or bill or billing or charge or charging or amount or value) near5 (ship or shipping or shipment or package or parcel or box or mail or letter or mail or mailpiece)	USPAT; US-PGPUB; EPO; JPO; DERWENT; IBM_TDB; USOCR	2004/03/06 14:25
4	BRS	L4	4235	3 near5 (communicate or communicated or communicating or communication or line or link or channel or lan or wan or internet or web or www or net or network)	USPAT; US-PGPUB; EPO; JPO; DERWENT; IBM_TDB; USOCR	2004/03/06 14:25
5	BRS	L5	203	2 and 4	USPAT; US-PGPUB; EPO; JPO; DERWENT; IBM_TDB; USOCR	2004/03/06 14:25
6	BRS	L6	2658	3 near10 3	USPAT; US-PGPUB; EPO; JPO; DERWENT; IBM_TDB; USOCR	2004/03/06 14:25

	Type	L #	Hits	Search Text	DBs	Time Stamp
7	BRS	L7	22186	3 near5 (low or lowest or lower or least or compare or comparison or comparing or minimum or min or small or smallest or smaller or shop or shipping or shopped)	USPAT; US-PGPUB; EPO; JPO; DERWENT; IBM_TDB; USOCR	2004/03/06 14:25
8	BRS	L8	82	5 and (6 or 7) <i>Scanned Ti, ab Kwic all</i>	USPAT; US-PGPUB; EPO; JPO; DERWENT; IBM_TDB; USOCR	2004/03/06 14:26
9	BRS	L13	53	("5485369" or "05276353" or "0165444" or "0172109" or "0219220" or "5869819" or "5724595" or "9710153").pn. or ((@pd<=19710101 not @pd<=19470101) and (705/22 or 705/28 or 705/401 or 705/408 or 705/410).ccls.) <i>Scanned Ti all</i>	USPAT; US-PGPUB; EPO; JPO; DERWENT; IBM_TDB; USOCR	2004/03/06 14:37

	Document ID	Issue Date	Inventor	Current OR	Current XRef	Pages
1	JP 05276353 A	19931022				4
2	US 6470327 B1	20021022	Carroll, Terri A. et al.	705/401	705/410; 709/220; 709/221; 709/222; 713/1; 713/100; 713/2	11
3	US 6466948 B1	20021015	Levitsky, Paul A. et al.	707/104.1	707/4	23
4	US 20030097306 A1	20030522	Boucher, Glen A. et al.	705/26		13
5	US 20020178074 A1	20021128	Bloom, Gregg	705/26		109
6	US 20020116318 A1	20020822	Thomas, Anthony Robert et al.	705/37		23
7	US 20020095308 A1	20020718	Pragelas, John et al.	705/1		15
8	US 20020087492 A1	20020704	Carroll, Terri A. et al.	705/404	705/30	8

18 results

	Document ID	Issue Date	Inventor	Current OR	Current XRef	Pages
9	US 20020083018 A1	20020627	Carroll, Terri A. et al.	705/401		10
10	US 20020069096 A1	20020606	Lindorfer, Paul et al.	705/7		89
11	US 20020065764 A1	20020530	Brodersen, Andrew N. JR. et al.	705/37		20
12	US 20020032612 A1	20020314	Williams, Daniel F. et al.	705/26	705/27	153
13	US 20020032573 A1	20020314	Williams, Daniel F. et al.	705/1		204
14	US 20020022983 A1	20020221	Barton, Timothy A.	705/7		30
15	US 20020016726 A1	20020207	Ross, Kenneth J.	705/7		26
16	US 20010044785 A1	20011122	Stolfo, Salvatore J. et al.	705/74		12
17	US 20010034608 A1	20011025	Gendreau, Marc	705/1	705/410	12

78 results

	Document ID	Issue Date	Inventor	Current OR	Current XRef	Pages
1	JP 05276353 A	19931022				4
2	JP 05276353 A	19931022	NOMURA, KEIICHI			4
3	US 5869819 A	19990209	Knowles, Carl Harry et al.	235/375		29
4	US 5724595 A	19980303	Gentner, Donald R.	715/501.1	345/744	9
5	US 5485369 A	19960116	Nicholls, Peter et al.	705/9	700/99; 705/401	35

L13 results

US-PAT-NO: 6470327

DOCUMENT-IDENTIFIER: US 6470327 B1

TITLE: Method and system for communicating with a postage meter through a web-browser in a postal or shipping system

DATE-ISSUED: October 22, 2002

INVENTOR-INFORMATION:

NAME	CITY	STATE	ZIP CODE	COUNTRY
Carroll; Terri A.	Trumbull	CT	N/A	N/A
Ellis; David A.	Wallingford	CT	N/A	N/A
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US-CL-CURRENT: 705/401, 705/410, 709/220, 709/221, 709/222, 713/1, 713/100, 713/2

ABSTRACT: The invention is a method and system for sending a print indicia command to a postage meter from a browser under control of a carrier management application in a data processing system which comprises a client node in communication with a provider server. The method begins with a system user logging onto a carrier manager application web site, through a web browser. The user requests that the web site download a set of programs from the web site to the client node while utilizing JAVA script functionality resident in the provider web pages. The script functionality further comprises a set of instructions for performing one or more activities. The programs are installable on a PC located at the client node and are for establishing control of the postage meter. Downloading of the programs further comprises installing and configuring an automation server and a postage meter driver at the client node. The postage meter is configured by identifying a set of characteristics of the postage meter; and, downloading the postage meter driver from the web site to the postage meter in accordance with the set of characteristics. Once the postage meter is configured, the system user logs onto the application and enters a set of parameters representative of an item to be shipped. The application identifies a carrier and a print indicia signal is sent to the postage meter, through the web browser, representative of the transaction cost.

23 Claims, 5 Drawing figures

Exemplary Claim Number: 1

Number of Drawing Sheets: 5

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Brief Summary Text - BSTX (6): Embedded systems, where the shipping application is embedded within a shipping scale, generally include PROM-based rating tables and their associated functionality. Data entries to the application are made via an operator keypad on the front of the scale or by scanning bar codes or similar symbology directly to certain fields within the application. Table data and certain rating functionality is generally added through the use of PROMs. The embedded systems are generally capable of producing a manifest for use by the carrier, as well as producing barcode or address labels for application to the parcel. These systems might also interface to a postage meter for producing proof of payment for a carrier such as the United States Postal Service.

Brief Summary Text - BSTX (7): PC-based systems are more flexible than embedded systems because they allow a greater range of peripherals, greater memory capacity, networking capabilities (both internet and intranet) and the ability to store records and address lists while accepting data download in a variety of ways. Rating and services functionality are also directed from the application, while the system shops for an appropriate rate from a database within a memory contained within the PC or from a rating table directed by a server. Address lists can be stored or forwarded as well. The ability of the PC-based system to provide a communications link to a network, while allowing integration with a client's information systems, is perhaps the greatest strength of these systems. Network links via the internet provide the system with an interface to a great number and variety of carrier web sites, increased functionality, and parcel tracking. Additionally, data relevant to shipping history for a particular location, or historical manifest data can be downloaded or uploaded in a quick and efficient manner as necessary. These systems too can also be interfaced to postage meters for proof of payment.

Brief Summary Text - BSTX (13): According to the invention, the object is achieved and the disadvantages of the prior art are overcome by a method and system for tripping a postage meter from a browser under control of a carrier management application in a data processing system. The data processing system comprises a client node in communication with a provider server, wherein the tripping of the postage meter causes an indicia to be printed by the postage meter. The client node can be one of a plurality of client nodes that are linked to the data processing system and wherein any one or more of such nodes has a postage meter for printing an indicia onto a label or a mailpiece. The indicia being indicative of the cost for shipping the parcel or mailpiece.

Brief Summary Text - BSTX (17): Once the postage meter is configured, the system user logs onto the carrier management application and enters a set of application parameters representative of the parcel or a mailpiece to be shipped. The set of application parameters further comprises a destination, a class or type of service by which the parcel or mailpiece will be shipped, and a desired period of time for a delivery of the parcel or mailpiece. Additionally, the parameters include a weight measurement which is entered into the carrier management application for the purpose of obtaining a cost of shipping the parcel or the mailpiece; the cost is determined as a function of the weight and the set of application parameters. Once the carrier has been identified, a trip signal or print indicia command (in the case of IBIP based indicia printing) is sent to the postage meter, through the web browser, automation server, and meter driver, wherein the trip signal or print indicia command is representative of the transaction cost.

Brief Summary Text - BSTX (20): The system also has a communications link for linking the web site and the postage meter at the client node. The communications link further comprises: a browser for accessing the web site by the client node; a network interface routine for allowing access to the network where the web site resides; and, communications means for physically interfacing the postage meter with the client node and allowing tripping of the postage meter, or acceptance of the print indicia command. The system further includes selection means for selecting the cost for shipping of the mailpiece; this selection causes the postage meter to trip, thereby causing the indicia to be printed.

Detailed Description Text - DETX (4): Interface 15 links subsystem 10 with subsystem 20. Subsystem 10 is a remote server which hosts the web site for determining a rate for shipping a parcel or mailpiece in accordance with parameters established in the carrier management application hosted by subsystem 10; a weight parameter is returned from weighing scale 30 through communication link 25 to subsystem 20 before entry into the shipping application.

Claims Text - CLTX (1): 1. A method of printing an indicia by a postage meter from a browser under control of a carrier management application in a data processing system, wherein said data processing system comprises a client node in communication with a provider server, and wherein said tripping of said postage meter causes an indicia to be printed by said postage meter wherein said indicia is indicative of a cost for shipping a parcel or a mailpiece, said method comprising the steps of: (a) logging onto a carrier manager application web site, through a web browser; (b) downloading a set of programs from said web site to said client node, wherein said set of programs is installable on a personal computer located at said client node and is for establishing control of said meter which is connected to said client node under direction of said carrier management application; (c) installing said set of programs on said personal computer at said client node; (d) configuring said postage meter; (e) logging onto said carrier management application; (f) entering a set of application parameters representative of a parcel or a mailpiece to be shipped, and determining a cost of said shipment based upon said set of application parameters; and (g) sending a print indicia command to said postage meter, through said web browser, wherein said trip signal is representative of said cost.

Claims Text - CLTX (14): 14. The method of claim 10, wherein said shipping parameters includes a weight measurement which is entered into said carrier management application for the purpose of obtaining a cost of shipping said parcel or said mailpiece, said cost determined as a function of said weight and said set of shipping parameters.

Claims Text - CLTX (15): 15. A system for sending a print indicia command to a postage meter from a browser under control of a carrier management application in a data processing system, wherein said data processing system comprises a client node in communication with a provider server, and wherein said tripping of said postage meter causes an indicia to be printed by said postage meter wherein said indicia is indicative of a cost for shipping a parcel or a mailpiece, said system comprising: (a) a web site for a provider server, said web site further comprising: (i) provider web pages; (ii) script functionality resident in said provider web pages for linking with a postage meter driver resident in a postage meter connected at said client node; (b) said postage meter at said client node, said postage meter further comprising: (i) said postage meter driver; (ii) a postage meter server resident at said client node and callable by said client node under control of said script functionality; (iii) script activation capability for allowing said script at said client node to link with said postage meter by utilizing said postage meter driver; (c) a communications link for linking said web site and said postage meter at said client node, said communications link further comprising: (i) a browser for accessing said web site by said client node; (ii) a network interface routine for allowing access to a network wherein said web site resides; and (iii) communications means for physically interfacing said postage meter with said network and allowing said tripping of said postage meter; and (d) selection means for selecting said cost for shipping of said mailpiece and wherein said selection causes said postage meter to trip, thereby causing said indicia to be printed.

US-PAT-NO: 6466948

DOCUMENT-IDENTIFIER: US 6466948 B1

TITLE: Trainable database for use in a method and system for returning a non-scale-based parcel weight

DATE-ISSUED: October 15, 2002

INVENTOR-INFORMATION:

NAME	CITY	STATE	ZIP CODE	COUNTRY
Levitsky; Paul A.	Monroe	CT	N/A	N/A
Sansone; Ronald P.	Weston	CT	N/A	N/A

US-CL-CURRENT: 707/104.1, 707/4

ABSTRACT: The invention is a method and system for determining a weight for use in a shipping application and for the establishment of a trainable weights database and a weight database training object. The method begins with establishing a database linked to the shipping application. The weight of a parcel to be shipped is determined by comparing a data entry at the shipping application with a set of data entries resident in the database. The comparison is performed by entering a description of the parcel to the system, and parsing the description to determine whether or not the data includes a known symbology or barcode. If it does, then the method matches the description with a locator function to locate the required weight; otherwise, the description is further parsed into match fields. If the comparison determines a weight, then the weight is returned to the shipping application for entry in an appropriate field; however, if the comparison does not return a weight, then a weight is determined by selecting an option from among a set of weight input options which includes an auto search mode. The determined weight is then input to the database in respect of a set of parameters resident in the data entry so that the determined weight can be used for subsequent transactions. Another aspect of the present invention, is a method of establishing and utilizing a weight database training object which is invoked to determine a weight to enter into the weight field of the shipping application.

38 Claims, 12 Drawing figures

Exemplary Claim Number: 1

Number of Drawing Sheets: 12

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Brief Summary Text - BSTX (16): OOD is known in the software arts and specific discussion of application design based upon OOD is not required for a thorough understanding of the applicant's claimed invention. It is, however, one object of the present claimed invention to disclose a method and system for utilizing object oriented design to effectively and efficiently link shipping, rating, and database search applications within a data processing system.

Brief Summary Text - BSTX (22): Mailing and shipping applications still rely on an important piece of data in determining the cost of shipment; that piece of data is weight. Programs have been developed that print postage to an envelope at the desktop, but these programs still require a weighing device to input that parameter into an algorithm that will determine the proper postage rate to be applied when producing a postage indicia. An exception to a weight-based need is when

the postage is set at a constant value and the weight of the mail piece is estimated; this exception is particularly susceptible to human error because of the estimation involved. Parcel shipping, in particular, is tied to the weight parameter in determining a cost for shipping a parcel because of the profusion of services available from individual carriers and the fact that parcels tend to be of varied weight and size.

Brief Summary Text - BSTX (32): The trainable weights database is linked to a rating server for determining a rate for shipping the parcel wherein the rate is determined by applying the weight to a carrier rate database, selecting one or more parameters that define a mode of shipment for the parcel, and determining the rate in respect of the weight and the mode of shipment. The one or more parameters defining the mode of shipment can comprise a class of service, a delivery date, or a destination zone.

Brief Summary Text - BSTX (34): The system of the present invention includes a trainable weights database residing in a data processing system having a shipping application. The system comprises data entry means for entering a set of data relative to the parcel into the data processing system. The system further comprises a set of one or more databases for saving and/or recording data relative to the products and components thereof that together form the parcel to be shipped. In addition, parsing means for parsing the set of data into data fields, together with a weight search functionality for performing a search for a weight relative to the parcel are included. If a weight is located, then the weight is returned to the shipping application for entry into a rate determining routine wherein the weight determining routine determines a rate to be charged for shipment of the parcel; and, if the weight is not located, then a weight is requested and returned via alternative weight determining means.

Brief Summary Text - BSTX (41): The method of utilizing the weight database training object, in a data processing system having a parcel shipping application, is of particular utility. The method comprises the steps of: creating a shipping document within the parcel shipping application; determining that the entry of a weight field is required within the shipping document (entry of the weight field further comprises a set of instructions for invoking the weight database training object); entering, through input means (such as a key board or scanner), the weight field into said shipping document; and, invoking the weight database training object, whereby the weight database training object performs weight determination to determine a weight to enter into a weight field of the shipping document and transmitting the weight to rate determination functionality for use in calculating a rate to be charged for shipping the parcel by a carrier. The transaction can be downloaded to output means (such as a manifest or label printer), in whole or in part, for subsequent report production.

Detailed Description Text - DETX (5): Database 54 is optionally linked to a rating server 52 to form subsystem 50. Subsystem 50 is a remote server which can determine a rate for shipping a parcel in accordance with parameters established in the shipping application hosted by subsystem 10 and a weight returned from database 54. Database 54 can be updated by data entry from subsystem 10 or from periodic and/or random updates transmitted by carrier server 28 and corrected or refined by database correction factors 32.

Detailed Description Text - DETX (18): A system user is shown co-located with a data center as element 150. Element 150 may take on one of three embodiments. The first embodiment is a desktop configuration utilizing a PC with at least an operating system, a shipping or carrier management software application, communication links, and a data base with related access means for accessing weight data. The second embodiment contemplated is a kiosk wherein the configuration contains the same elements as with the desktop configuration but are housed in a kiosk to provide a retail function wherein the packages are rated and deposited for entry into the carrier traffic stream. The kiosk would be provided with a billing or cash acceptance system so that the cost of shipping could be accounted for at the kiosk. Additionally, a receipt establishing and printing means would give the system user a record of the transaction. The third embodiment is an over-the-counter configuration wherein each of the elements present in the desktop or kiosk configurations are present as well, but the elements are accessed from a counter-top in a retail store environment.

Detailed Description Text - DETX (23): Turning to FIG. 2A, there is shown the method of the preferred embodiment of the present invention. The method begins at step 200 with the initiation of a shipping or carrier management application (hereinafter referred to as a shipping application) in a data processing system. The application can be configured to access carrier data representative of one carrier, or in the alternative, can be configured to select from among two or more carriers as based upon selection criteria selected by a system user. For example, such criteria can include: cost; desired date of delivery; available services; or, shipping mode.

Detailed Description Text - DETX (28): Turning to step 230, the method asks if the weight can be interpolated. Interpolation is required if the weight in the database is associated with a unit size or measurement that differs from that of the product for which a weight is sought. If the response to the query is "NO," then the method returns along path D to step 212 as is shown in FIG. 2A. However, if the response to the query is "YES," then the method advances to step 232 where the weight is interpolated as based upon per unit values and the weight is returned to the shipping application at step 234.

Detailed Description Text - DETX (31): In FIG. 2C, path 3 is shown re-entering the method flow at step 244. At step 244, the method queries as to whether or not the parcel weight is to be entered from a weighing scale. If the response to the query is "YES," then the method advances to step 248 where the weight is entered from the scale before being returned to the database at step 250 for future use; the database will assign the weight to a product field based upon its input parameters. Essentially simultaneously with the advance to step 250, the method will return the weight to the shipping application at step 252 for use in determining the rate to be charged for shipping of the parcel. Additionally, path C, coming from step 236, re-enters the method flow just before step 248. Returning to step 244, if the response to the query is "NO," then the weight is entered manually at step 246 before advancing to step 252.

Detailed Description Text - DETX (32): At step 252, the weight is returned to the shipping application for use in determining the rate to be charged for shipping of the parcel. Additionally, path A, coming from step 228, and path B coming from step 236, both as shown in FIG. 2A, and

path 4 coming from step 240 as is shown in FIG. 2B, re-enter the method flow at step 252.

Claims Text - CLTX (5): 5. The method of claim 1 wherein said trainable weights database is linked to a rating server for determining a rate for shipping said parcel wherein said rate is determined by: (a) applying said weight to a carrier rate database; (b) selecting one or more parameters that define a mode of shipment for said parcel; (c) determining said rate in respect of said weight and said mode of shipment.

Claims Text - CLTX (13): 13. A system for determining a weight for a parcel to be shipped, said system including a trainable weights database residing in a data processing system, said data processing system having a shipping application, said system comprising: (a) data entry means for entering a set of data relative to said parcel into said data processing system; (b) a set of one or more databases for saving and/or recording data relative to products and components thereof; (c) parsing means for parsing said set of data into data fields; (d) weight search functionality for performing a search for a weight relative to said parcel; and, (i) if a weight is located, then returning said weight to said shipping application for entry into a rate determining routine wherein said weight determining routine is for determining a rate to be charged for shipment of said parcel; and (ii) if said weight is not located, then requesting said weight be returned via alternative weight determining means.

Claims Text - CLTX (31): 31. A method of utilizing a weight database training object, in an object oriented development environment of a data processing system having a parcel shipping application, said method comprising the steps of: (a) creating a shipping document within said parcel shipping application; (b) determining that the entry of a weight field is required within said shipping document; (c) entering, through input means, said weight field into said shipping document; and (d) invoking said weight database training object, whereby said weight database training object performs weight determination to determine a weight to enter into a weight field of said shipping document and transmitting said weight to rate determination functionality for use in calculating a rate to be charged for shipping said parcel by a carrier.

PGPUB-DOCUMENT-NUMBER: 20020022983

PGPUB-FILING-TYPE: new

DOCUMENT-IDENTIFIER: US 20020022983 A1

TITLE: System and method for supply chain integration over computer networks

PUBLICATION-DATE: February 21, 2002

INVENTOR-INFORMATION:

NAME	CITY	STATE	COUNTRY	RULE-47
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Barton, Timothy A.	Overland Park	KS	US	
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US-CL-CURRENT: 705/7

ABSTRACT: A network-based marketing system is disclosed which allows an entire supply chain to obtain real-time, single-source freight services. The services are preferably provided over the Internet, and accessed via web browser software in the form of web pages automated by a web server and database server. The invention permits the users to receive rates for freight in real-time, schedule, track and invoice shipments via a distributed network, and manage all such shipments for an entire supply chain via a single master account.

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Abstract Paragraph - ABTX (1): A network-based marketing system is disclosed which allows an entire supply chain to obtain real-time, single-source freight services. The services are preferably provided over the Internet, and accessed via web browser software in the form of web pages automated by a web server and database server. The invention permits the users to receive rates for freight in real-time, schedule, track and invoice shipments via a distributed network, and manage all such shipments for an entire supply chain via a single master account.

Brief Description of Drawings Paragraph - DRTX (6): [0025] FIG. 5 shows a shipment rating page for the master account for a web-based version of the invention.

Detail Description Paragraph - DETX (24): [0064] "The service" means the service for providing services related to shipping and supply chain shipping management over a network such as the Internet or World Wide Web, or any other network.

Detail Description Paragraph - DETX (42): [0081] FIG. 4 shows the main supply chain integrator page for the master account. The main supply chain integrator page provides links from which the user of the master account may rate and schedule shipments (rate and schedule link 41), add or modify authorized users (modify authorized users link 42), view, add or modify products (view products link 43), and view reports or tracking logs (view logs/reports/tracking link 44). The user may also view, add or modify accounts via complete access accounts link 45 (for viewing, adding or modifying complete access accounts) or limited access accounts link 46 (for viewing, adding or modifying limited access accounts and subaccounts). This set of links also appears in each page reachable by the master account, permitting the master account easy, flexible access to all of the functions available to the master account.

Detail Description Paragraph - DETX (43): [0082] FIG. 5 shows a sample shipment rating page for the master account for a web-based version of the invention. This shipment rating page is similar to the shipment rating described in detail in pending U.S. patent application Ser. No. 09/557822 and pending U.S. patent application Ser. No. 09/303788, and, as described therein, may be performed in a variety of ways with interactions with the server as appropriate. Users of the master account may rate and ship to and from any location. Users of a complete access subaccount may also ship to and from any location. Users of a limited access subaccount may ship to and from the locations permitted to that subaccount only.

Detail Description Paragraph - DETX (51): [0090] FIG. 12 shows a sample shipment log for the master account for a web-based version of the invention. The shipment log is a web page which permits access to the bills of lading for each shipment as well as tracking information. The sample shipment log displays the shipment data in a columnar format, sorted as specified on the shipping activity report page (FIG. 11). In the master account report, the rows show the BOL number, Origin Zip, Destination Zip, Tracking Number, Pro Number, Bill to, Cost, Carrier, set up date, Pickup Date, invoice #, and POD for each shipment shipped using the master account, or any subaccount. Subaccounts may also access shipment reports. Complete access accounts may be permitted to view some or all of the shipments made under the master account. Likewise, limited access accounts are typically permitted to view only shipments to or from them, but additional access may be permitted. There are two special sets of data displayed. BOL Number data is displayed in the form of BOL links 121, and Pro Number data is displayed in the form of Pro Number links 122. These links permit the user to track the shipment (by clicking on the Pro Number link for the appropriate shipment) or to view the BOL for the shipment (by clicking on the BOL link for the appropriate shipment). In addition, the user may search for a specific BOL by entering the desired BOL number in BOL text box 123 and clicking on search button 124. If such a BOL exists, the system will scroll or alter the display to contain the appropriate shipment, which may then be tracked or have the BOL viewed as normal.

Detail Description Paragraph - DETX (52): [0091] FIG. 13 shows the Complete Access Accounts page. From this page the user of the master account may add or modify complete access accounts. By clicking on Add a New Complete Access Account link 130 the user of the master account will be redirected to the Add New Complete Access Account page (FIG. 14). By clicking on the name of the account to be modified, which is displayed as one of existing complete access account links 131, the user will be redirected to the Modify Company Info Page (FIG. 15). In addition, the user may alter the billing of a complete access account by using one of billing drop down boxes 132. The billing drop down box 132 for each account will permit the user of the master account to change the entity to whom the shipments made by the subaccount will be billed, generally either the subaccount (such as in the case of a subdivision or department of the master account) or the master account itself. The user may also modify authorized users for the subaccount by clicking on the Authorized Users link 133 for that subaccount. The modification pages are similar in form and function to those shown in FIGS. 6 and 7, but the authorized users will be users of the specific subaccount, rather than of the master account. Likewise, the view logs links 134 will permit the user of the master account to view logs limited to a specific subaccount, exactly as described in FIGS. 11 and 12, but limited to shipments made under the subaccount whose view logs link 134

was used. Finally, the user may rate and schedule shipments for any of the subaccounts themselves by selecting the rate and schedule shipments link 135 for the appropriate account. A complete access subaccount will be permitted all of the shipping privileges accorded to the master account (i.e., they may ship to or from any location) but will not be granted access to maintain or alter the master account or subaccounts themselves.

Claims Text - CLTX (2): 1. A method of coordinating shipping over a network comprising: providing a master account to a customer; said master account providing the customer the ability to create and alter subaccounts; said master account also permitting said customer to maintain and manage a database of shipping information for a supply chain; said supply chain comprising the master account and subaccounts of said master account; and said master account also permitting said customer to manage billing for shipping activities of said supply chain.

US-PAT-NO: 5869819
DOCUMENT-IDENTIFIER: US 5869819 A
TITLE: Internet-based system and method for tracking objects bearing URL-
encoded bar code symbols
DATE-ISSUED: February 9, 1999
INVENTOR-INFORMATION:
NAME CITY STATE ZIP CODE COUNTRY
Knowles; Carl Harry Morristown NJ N/A N/A
Wilz; David Sewell NJ N/A N/A
US-CL-CURRENT: 235/375

ABSTRACT: A novel Web-based package routing, tracking and delivering system and method that uses URL/ZIP-CODE encoded bar code symbols on parcels and packages. The system comprises one or more Routing, Tracking and Delivery (RTD) Internet Server Subsystems connected to the Internet infrastructure and updated at any instant of time with package tracking information. A Package Log-In/Shipping Subsystem is located at each shipping location and connected to the RTD Internet Server by way of the Internet infrastructure. A Package Routing Subsystem is located at a hub station and connected to the RTD Internet Server by way of the Internet infrastructure. A Portable Package Delivery Subsystem is carried by each package delivery person, and connected to the RTD Internet Server by way of the Internet infrastructure communication link. At each remote hub station within the system, the URL/ZIP-CODE encoded bar code symbol is automatically scanned by way of the Internet infrastructure; the encoded destination Zip Code is locally recovered and used to route the package at the hub station; and the locally recovered URL is used to access the RTD Internet Server and update the location of the package within the system. The Portable Package Delivery Subsystem is used to read the URL/ZIP-CODE encoded bar code symbol near the delivery destination in order to access the RTD Internet Server and display delivery information and the like to facilitate the delivery process.

10 Claims, 24 Drawing figures
Exemplary Claim Number: 1
Number of Drawing Sheets: 15

----- KWIC -----

DATE ISSUED - PD (1): 19990209

Brief Summary Text - BSTX (6): For example, if one is currently at a Web-site (i.e., in a particular HyperText Markup Language (HTML) document), at which there is a highlighted or embedded "link" specifying the Internet address of another Web-site (i.e., another HTML document), then the user can "surf to" this other Web-site by simply "clicking on" or selecting the highlighted URL with his or her pointing device (i.e., "mouse") in a conventional manner. The ability to connect to other Web-sites by simply pointing and clicking on a highlighted URLs embedded in an HTML document has contributed enormously to the growth and popularity of the Internet in the last few years.

Brief Summary Text - BSTX (7): If the user desires to connect to a Web-site that is not referenced in a HTML document viewed through a browser program, then the user oftentimes finds it necessary to manually enter the URL of the Web-site (e.g., "http://www.metrologic.com") into the browser program. This requires manually pressing a sequence of keys on a keyboard or remote control device, corresponding to the characters of the URL being selected. In addition to being time consuming, this Web-site surfing technique is prone to errors, causing the browser program to connect to the wrong Web-site or return a message stating that the Domain Name of the Web-site sought after cannot be found. From practical point of view, this is quite frustrating to the Internet user.

Brief Summary Text - BSTX (29): Another object of the present invention is to provide a novel Web-based document tracking and management system, in which each printed document (e.g., brochure, drawing, 3-D objects or specimens, photograph, specification, blue-print, and the like) to be tracked and managed within the system is uniquely assigned and affixed with a printed URL-encoded bar code symbol that specifies (i.e., points to) a particular information storage location within an HTML-encoded relational database management system (RDBMS), realized on a Web-based information server located on the Internet or behind the corporate firewall of an HTTP-supporting Intranet.

Brief Summary Text - BSTX (33): A further object of the present invention is to provide such a Web-based package routing, tracking and delivery system and method, wherein one or more Routing, Tracking and Delivery (RTD) Internet Server Subsystems are connected to the Internet and updated at any instant of time with package related information produced by either (i) a Package Log-In/Shipping Subsystem that is located at a product shipping location (e.g., warehouse) and connected to the RTD Internet Server by a first data communication link, (ii) a Package Routing Subsystem that is located at a hub station and connected to the RTD Internet Server by a second data communication link, or (iii) a Portable Package Delivery Subsystem that is carried by the package delivery person and connected to the RTD Internet Server by a wireless data communication link.

Drawing Description Text - DRTX (19): FIG. 13A is a schematic representation of the information architecture of the RTD Internet Server of the Web-based RTD System of the present invention, showing its relational database management system (RDBMS), Common Gateway Interface (CGI), and HTTP Server serving an HTML-encoded web-page having URL-specified information storage fields represented therein;

Detailed Description Text - DETX (39): In the illustrative embodiments, the exemplary information resources have been indicated as being stored within WWW information servers, and thus, the URLs for such information resources have been included in the character substring "http://www." It is understood, however, that URL-encoded bar code symbols according to the present invention may also refer (i.e., point) to information resources stored on any type of Internet information server (e.g., a FTP

information server) accessible through an Internet browser or communication program of an Internet Scanning Terminal of the present invention.

Detailed Description Text - DETX (41): In such an embodiment illustrated in FIG. 9, the primary (i.e., base) portion of the URL (e.g., "<http://www.metrologic.com>") identifying the location of the WWW Server can be encoded within a first bar code symbol, whereas the auxiliary (i.e., extension) portion of the URL (e.g., "</products/MS6720.html>") indicating the location of the information resource (web pages) relative to the identified WWW Server can be encoded with a second bar code symbol. Internet Access to such an information resource could then be achieved in a two-step process, namely: (1) scan the first bar code symbol to access the home page of the WWW Server located by "<http://www.metrologic.com>"; and (2) scan the second bar code symbol to access the information resource located by "[Products/MS6720/.html](/Products/MS6720/.html)". Preferably, the primary and auxiliary segments of the URL would be printed below the first and second bar code symbols respectively, as shown in FIG. 9. This composite bar code symbol structure can be used during the menu composition process of the present invention as described in detail hereinabove.

Detailed Description Text - DETX (56): As indicated at Block A of FIG. 14, the package log-on/shipping procedure begins by assigning a package identification number (PIN) to the package to be logged-into the RTD system of the present invention. This procedure involves the use of the Package Log-In/Shipping Computer Subsystem 52 illustrated in FIG. 11 and the RTD Internet Server Subsystem 51 shown in FIG. 13. The request for a new package identification number is transmitted from the Package Log-In/Shipping Computer 52 to the RTD Internet Server 51 using electronic forms sent by way of HTTP well known in the Internet art. Then at Block B, the Package Log-in/Shipping Computer 52 is used to send the identified destination ZIP CODE for the package to the RTD Server 51. At Block C, the RTD Server assigns the package (and thus the package identification number) a unique HTML-encoded information storage location on a web-page of the RTD Internet Server and then links the URL of this information storage location with the package identification number. Then at Block D, the Package Log-In/Shipping Computer 52 encodes the URL and the ZIP CODE (associated with the package identification number) within a bar code symbol information structure of either 1-D or 2-D bar code symbology, and then prints out the bar code symbol on a label. Then at Block E, the printed bar code label is applied to the package, and thereafter the Package Log-In/shipping Computer 52 transmits a confirmation request to the RTD Internet Server 51 confirming entry of the package identification number, Zip Code and URL assigned thereto into the RDBMS of the System. As indicated at Block F, upon receiving confirmation from the RTD Internet Server 51 that such information elements are recorded in the RDBMS, the labelled package is released for shipment to its destination by way of a shipping route available within the RTD system. The above procedure is repeated for each and every package that is to be shipped using the system.

Detailed Description Text - DETX (58): As indicated at Block A of FIG. 16, the bar code scanner at the Package Routing Subsystem reads the URL/ZIP Code encoded bar

code symbol on the package and obtains the information representative of the URL and the Zip Code. Then, at Block B, the Package Routing Subsystem uses the locally-recovered Zip Code to route the package at the Package Routing Subsystem at the hub station of the system. Then at Block C, the Routing Subsystem uses the obtained URL to access the RTD Internet Server by way of HTTP and update the location of the scanned package within the RDBMS of the system. Each time the package is scanned at a different Package Routing Subsystem, or other Internet Scanning Terminal located within the RTD system, the current location of the scanned package within the System is updated, by ensuring that each HTTP request sent to the RTD Internet Server (by the Package Routing Subsystem) includes information identifying the requesting Package Routing Subsystem.

Detailed Description Text - DETX (60): As indicated at Block A of FIG. 18, the delivery person uses the Portable Delivery Computer 54 hereof to read the URL/ZIP-CODE encoded label on the package in order to recover the URL encoded therein. The Portable Delivery Computer can be mounted within the delivery vehicle or held in the hand of the delivery person. As indicated at Block B, the Portable Delivery Computer automatically connects to the RTD Internet Server 51 by way of HTTP using the locally recovered URL encoded in the scanned bar code symbol. As indicated at Block C, the information elements shown in FIG. 13B, that are associated with the RDBMS information record linked to the URL, are automatically displayed on the display screen of the Package Delivery Computer 53. Such information, particularly the package delivery instructions, are then used to deliver the package to its destination. Such information can be of a multimedia nature, including audio instructions and graphical images of delivery maps to facilitate the delivery process.

Claims Text - CLTX (7): an HTTP Server for serving HTML-encoded web-pages having URL-specified information storage fields represented therein, each said URL-specified information storage field being linked to one said package logged-in with said system; and

Claims Text - CLTX (22): an HTTP Server for serving HTML-encoded web-pages having URL-specified information storage fields represented therein, each said URL-specified information storage field being linked to one said object logged-in with said system; and

US-PAT-NO: 5724595
DOCUMENT-IDENTIFIER: US 5724595 A
TITLE: Simple method for creating hypertext links
DATE-ISSUED: March 3, 1998
INVENTOR-INFORMATION:
NAME CITY STATE ZIP CODE COUNTRY
Gentner; Donald R. Palo Alto CA N/A N/A
US-CL-CURRENT: 715/501.1, 345/744

ABSTRACT: An improved method and system for creating a link in an original hypertext document to a target hypertext document when a link creating icon is dragged from the target hypertext document to a specified location in the original hypertext document. The title of the target hypertext document is inserted at the link text.

13 Claims, 5 Drawing figures

Exemplary Claim Number: 1

Number of Drawing Sheets: 4

----- KWIC -----

DATE ISSUED - PD (1): 19980303

Detailed Description Text - DETX (7): In this example, the web author wishes to create an HTML link to the target page 12 at the specified location 16 in the original page.

DIALOG 11 OCTOBER 2003

File 2:INSPEC 1969-2003/Sep W4 (c) 2003 Institution of Electrical Engineers
 File 9:Business & Industry(R) Jul/1994-2003/Oct 10 (c) 2003 Resp. DB Svcs.
 File 15:ABI/Inform(R) 1971-2003/Oct 11 (c) 2003 ProQuest Info&Learning
 File 16:Gale Group PROMT(R) 1990-2003/Oct 10 (c) 2003 The Gale Group
 File 20:Dialog Global Reporter 1997-2003/Oct 11 (c) 2003 The Dialog Corp.
 File 35:Dissertation Abs Online 1861-2003/Sep (c) 2003 ProQuest Info&Learning
 File 65:Inside Conferences 1993-2003/Oct W1 (c) 2003 BLDSC all rts. reserv.
 File 99:Wilson Appl. Sci & Tech Abs 1983-2003/Sep (c) 2003 The HW Wilson Co.
 File 148:Gale Group Trade & Industry DB 1976-2003/Oct 10 (c)2003 The Gale Group
 File 160:Gale Group PROMT(R) 1972-1989 (c) 1999 The Gale Group
 File 233:Internet & Personal Comp. Abs. 1981-2003/Jul (c) 2003, EBSCO Pub.
 File 256:SoftBase:Reviews,Companies&Prods. 82-2003/Sep (c)2003 Info.Sources Inc
 File 275:Gale Group Computer DB(TM) 1983-2003/Oct 10 (c) 2003 The Gale Group
 File 347:JAPIO Oct 1976-2003/Jun(Updated 031006) (c) 2003 JPO & JAPIO
 File 348:EUROPEAN PATENTS 1978-2003/Oct W01 (c) 2003 European Patent Office
 File 349:PCT FULLTEXT 1979-2002/UB=20031009,UT=20031002 (c) 2003
 WIPO/Univentio
 File 474:New York Times Abs 1969-2003/Oct 10 (c) 2003 The New York Times
 File 475:Wall Street Journal Abs 1973-2003/Oct 10 (c) 2003 The New York Times
 File 476:Financial Times Fulltext 1982-2003/Oct 11 (c) 2003 Financial Times Ltd
 File 583:Gale Group Globalbase(TM) 1986-2002/Dec 13 (c) 2002 The Gale Group
 File 610:Business Wire 1999-2003/Oct 11 (c) 2003 Business Wire.
 File 613:PR Newswire 1999-2003/Oct 11 (c) 2003 PR Newswire Association Inc
 File 621:Gale Group New Prod. Annou.(R) 1985-2003/Oct 10 (c) 2003 The Gale Group
 File 624:McGraw-Hill Publications 1985-2003/Oct 10 (c) 2003 McGraw-Hill Co. Inc
 File 634:San Jose Mercury Jun 1985-2003/Oct 10 (c) 2003 San Jose Mercury News
 File 636:Gale Group Newsletter DB(TM) 1987-2003/Oct 10 (c) 2003 The Gale Group
 File 810:Business Wire 1986-1999/Feb 28 (c) 1999 Business Wire
 File 813:PR Newswire 1987-1999/Apr 30 (c) 1999 PR Newswire Association Inc
 File 6:NTIS 1964-2003/Oct W2 (c) 2003 NTIS, Intl Cpyrght All Rights Res
 File 7:Social SciSearch(R) 1972-2003/Oct W1 (c) 2003 Inst for Sci Info
 File 8:Ei Compendex(R) 1970-2003/Sep W4 (c) 2003 Elsevier Eng. Info. Inc.
 File 34:SciSearch(R) Cited Ref Sci 1990-2003/Oct W1 (c) 2003 Inst for Sci Info
 File 94:JICST-EPlus 1985-2003/Oct W1 (c)2003 Japan Science and Tech Corp(JST)
 File 434:SciSearch(R) Cited Ref Sci 1974-1989/Dec (c) 1998 Inst for Sci Info

Set	Items	Description
S1	376698	(MANAG????? OR TRACK???? OR MONITOR????) (5N) (SHIP OR SHIPPING OR SHIPMENT OR PACKAGE OR PARCEL OR BOX OR MAIL OR LETTER OR MAIL OR MAILPIECE)
S2	65563	S1 (5N) (COMMUNICAT???? OR LINE OR LINK OR CHANNEL OR LAN OR WAN OR INTERNET OR WEB OR WWW OR NET OR NETWORK)
S3	805918	(COST???? OR PRIC???? OR FEE???? OR RAT???? OR BILL???? OR CHARG???? OR AMOUNT OR VALUE) (5N) (SHIP OR SHIPPING OR SHIPMENT OR PACKAGE OR PARCEL OR BOX OR MAIL OR LETTER OR MAIL OR MAILPIECE)
S4	53236	S3 (5N) (COMMUNICAT???? OR LINE OR LINK OR CHANNEL OR LAN OR WAN OR INTERNET OR WEB OR WWW OR NET OR NETWORK)
S5	3049	S2 AND S4
S6	805918	S3 (10N) S3
S7	2085247	3 (5N) (LOW OR LOWER OR LOWEST OR LEAST OR COMPAR????? OR MINIMUM OR MIN OR SMALL????? OR SHOP?????)
S8	3049	S5 AND (S6 OR S7)
S9	53600	S3 (5N) (LOW OR LOWEST OR LOWEST OR LEAST OR COMPAR????? OR MINIMUM OR MIN OR SMALL????? OR SHOP?????)
S10	306	S5 AND S9
S11	191	RD S10 (unique items) [Scanned ti,kwic all]

SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR SHIPPING, ACCOUNTING, AND TRACKING
COMMON CARRIER SHIPMENTS

SYSTEME ET PROCEDE , PERMETTANT L'EXPEDITION, LA
COMPTABILISATION ET LE SUIVI DE CHARGEMENTS DE TRANSPORTEURS
COMMUNS

Patent and Priority Information (Country, Number, Date):

Patent: WO 200165444 A1 20010907 (WO 0165444)

Fulltext Availability:

Detailed Description

Detailed Description

... not only the respective tracking numbers, but also the respective common carriers employed to ship the respective parcels. Moreover, in order for a shipper to **compare the cost of shipping a parcel** using various common carriers, the shipper must first inquire from each common carrier individually, and then compare costs.

SLJMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention...a step 204. In an embodiment, the list of common carriers for shipping is compiled after receiving at least the information required for determining a **shipping rate** of at least one common carrier. In a specific embodiment, the list of common carriers for shipping is compiled after receiving the origination ZIP code, the destination ZIP...

...list of common carriers may include shipping rates for each listed service offered by each listed common carrier, in order to assist the shipper in **comparing costs** of the common carriers. The **shipping rates** may include a **fee** assessed by the **shipping** service company.

In one embodiment, the server system 102 may obtain common carriers and respective shipping costs from the database system 105. The shipping costs...

...parcel weights, parcel dimensions, classes of service, and according to origination and destination locations. In another embodiment, if a common carrier provides access to its **shipping** services and **costs** over the **Internet**, the server system 102 may obtain the common carrier shipping costs from that common carrier by querying, via the Internet, a server system operated by...web page including the list of common carriers and transfers the common carrier selection web page to the shipper computer 108. The common carrier selection **web** page preferably includes **shipping costs** for each common carrier in order to facilitate a cost comparison of the various common carriers. Additionally, the common carrier selection **web**

page may include multiple **shipping** services, and their associated **costs**, for one or more of the common carriers.

In the specific embodiment, a shipper, using the shipper computer 108, then selects one of the common...

...the server system 102 in any number of ways.

For example, the server system 102 may select a common carrier and associated service with a **lowest shipping cost**. Also, the server system 102 may select a common carrier based upon a preferred common carrier of the shipper, and select a service based upon...a common carrier tracking number in any number of ways known to those skilled in the art. For example, if the chosen common carrier offers **internet -arranged shipping**, the agent may obtain a **tracking** number from a common carrier server system 120 using the agent computer I/O connected with the internet 106. Additionally, the agent may obtain...

11/TI,PD,KWIC/140 (Item 14 from file: 349)
DIALOG(R)File 349:(c) 2003 WIPO/Univentio. All rts. reserv.

APPARATUS, SYSTEMS AND METHODS FOR ONLINE, MULTI-PARCEL,
MULTI-CARRIER, MULTI-SERVICE PARCEL RETURNS SHIPPING MANAGEMENT
DISPOSITIF, SYSTEMES ET PROCEDES DESTINES A LA GESTION EN LIGNE
MULTI-COLIS, MULTI-TRANSPORTEUR ET MULTI-SERVICE POUR L'EXPEDITION
DE MARCHANDISES EN RETOUR

Patent and Priority Information (Country, Number, Date):

Patent: WO 200172109 A2 20011004 (WO 0172109)

Fulltext Availability:

Detailed Description

Claims

Detailed Description

... as it appears in the Patent and Trademark Office patent file or records, but otherwise reserves all copyright rights whatsoever.

-II"iShip.com.", "iShip", "The **Internet Package Shipper**", "**Price If**", "**Sell If**", "**Track If**", "**Ship It**", "**Shipping Tools**", "My iShip" and associated logos are trademarks of Stamps.com, Inc. The names of actual companies and products mentioned herein may be the trademarks... 20c, in order to pay for return shipping, the Return System prompts the Consumer to specify Return Shipping Preferences 366, prepares and displays a **Graphic Comparison** of the **costs of shipping** the item with a plurality of Carriers and Services 367, and prompts the Consumer to select and pay for shipping the package according to the...user's client PC, issues a rating request, the System passes a list of carrier identifiers for the carriers enabled for that user to the **Rating.DLL** operating on the **shipping Web** server to which the **rating** request is directed.

The **Rating.DLL** consists of various rating-related functions, one of which is referred to as 1 1 "**Get-Rate-Function**". Get...return package, the Consumer can track the shipment through the Merchant's online store. FIG. 40 depicts an Items Ordered Screen. By clicking on the **Track your package link** 405, the Consumer can track the package associated with the described item. FIG. 41 is a graphic representation of a Tracking Information Screen depicting status information about the tracked package.

FIGS. 42-45 depict an alternative Consumer Tracking embodiment in which clicking the **Track your package link** 405 as depicted in FIG. 42 generates a Track Your Package screen as depicted in FIG. 43. The Track Your Package Screen provides a window...number error. If the Carrier tracking number is a valid number, the Server will not attempt to match the number to a manifested 1 3 **package**; the Server will **track** the **package** using the particular Carrier's **Internet** tracking routine; and will return the tracking response to the Web Client of the requesting User.

1 5 In an alternative embodiment, if the tracking...
...the package on the same day it is shipped.

In this alternative embodiment, once the Server has identified the Carrier tracking number, the Server will **track** the **package** using the Carrier's **Internet tracking** routine. If the tracking response from the Carrier's Internet tracking routing indicates an error, the Server will make another attempt to **track** the **package** through the Carrier's **Internet tracking** routine. If the second tracking 3 1 request results in an error, the Server will notify the Web Client of the requesting User that the...the basic tracking information provided by the particular Carrier's Internet tracking function. In one embodiment of the invention, when the user provides a Carrier **tracking** number to **track** a **package**, the User's **Web Client** requires the User to identify the Carrier. If the User provides a System tracking number, then if the User is logged on to the...

Claim
... services.

12 The online merchandise return computer system of Claim 1 1, the computer system further programmed to: generate a display of an interactive graphic **comparison** of **shipping rates** for the return 3 1 request for shipping the particular package for each of the selected services offered by each of the selected carriers.

13 The online merchandise return computer system of Claim 12 wherein the interactive graphic **shipping rate comparison** display comprising an array.

14 The online merchandise return computer system of Claim 13 wherein said array comprising a plurality of cells.

15 The online...by a consumer to return at least one item of merchandise; generate in response to said merchandise return request a display of an interactive graphic **comparison** of **shipping rates** for the return request for **shipping** a package containing an item of merchandise to be returned, said display showing a shipping rate for each of a set of services offered by...for each of the selected services.

50 The method of Claim 49, the method further comprising: 3 1 generating a display of an interactive graphic **comparison** of **shipping rates** for the return request for **shipping** the particular package for each of the selected services offered by each of the selected carriers.

51 The inethod of Claim 50 wherein the interactive graphic **shipping rate comparison** display comprising an array.

52 The method of Claim 51 wherein said array comprising a plurality of cells.

53 The method of Claim 52 wherein...

...by a consumer to return at least one item of merchandise; generating in response to said merchandise return request a display of an interactive graphic **comparison of shipping rates** for the return request for **shipping** a package containing an item of merchandise to be returned, said display showing a shipping rate for each of a set of services offered by...selected services.

9 88. The computer product of Claim 87, the computer product having further instructions for: generating a display of an interactive graphic **comparison of shipping rates** for the return request for **shipping** the particular package for each of the selected services offered by each of the selected carriers.

89 The computer product of Claim 88 wherein the interactive graphic **shipping rate comparison** display comprising an array.

90 The computer product of Claim 89 wherein said array comprising a plurality of cells.

91 The computer product of Claim...

...consumer to return at least one item of merchandise; 2 1 generating in response to said merchandise return request a display of an interactive graphic **comparison of shipping rates** for the return request for **shipping** a package containing an item of merchandise to be returned, said display showing a shipping rate for each of a set of services offered by...The computer system of Claim 125, the computer system further comprising: 1 8 a set of instructions for generating a display of an interactive graphic **comparison of 1 9 shipping rates** for the return request for **shipping** the particular package for each of the selected services offered by each of the selected carriers. 2 1

127. The computer system of Claim 126 wherein the interactive graphic **shipping rate comparison** display comprising an array. 128. The computer system of Claim 127 wherein said array comprising a plurality of cells. 28 129. The computer ...least one item of merchandise; 9 a set of instructions for generating in response to said merchandise return request a display of an interactive graphic **comparison of shipping rates** for the return request for **shipping** a package 1 containing an item of merchandise to be returned, said display showing a shipping rate for each of a set of services offered...

11/TI,PD,KWIC/136 (Item 10 from file: 349)

DIALOG(R)File 349:(c) 2003 WIPO/Univentio. All rts. reserv.

ELECTRONIC MARKET AND RELATED METHODS SUITABLE FOR
TRANSPORTATION AND SHIPPING SERVICES

CYBERMARCHE ET TECHNIQUES EN RAPPORT POUR SERVICES DE
TRANSPORT ET D'EXPEDITION

Patent and Priority Information (Country, Number, Date):

Patent: WO 200219220 A2 20020307 (WO 0219220)

Fulltext Availability:

Detailed Description

Detailed Description

... 2 customer retains the other part of the form. The parcel barcode on the parcel is then optically scanned at each stage of delivery to **track** the progress for the **parcel** electronically. The barcode scanner **communicates** with a host computer to transmit the parcel ID to a host computer. The parcel ID and the location information of the barcode scanner are...

...status of a freight movement. Additionally, it has become increasingly more popular for independent shipping fleets and common carriers in the freight industry to supply **Internet web** sites that include published **rate** information for .specific services (**shipping** types, lanes, etc.) offered by that carrier. The shipping customer (i.e., the entity desiring to ship given cargo by one or more offered services) may then navigate to the carrier's web site at his or her convenience using a conventional **web** browser and obtain useful **shipping** and **rate** information.

While this approach is advantageous in that it provides customers with readily accessible rate and service information around the clock, there is the inherent...

...web sites (or by calling those carriers who do not publish service and rate information) and manually compare the obtained rate information.

Moreover, many carrier **web** sites do not provide current **rate** information to **shipping** customers without the customer first identifying itself (perhaps in a secure manner) to the carrier. Further, even if customers do spend the time searching across...designated preferred catalog customers or, more preferably, multiple levels of preferred catalog customers. Thus, in this manner, loyal repeat customers could be quoted lower catalog **rates** on one or more **shipping** services offered as **compared** to the catalog rates quoted to less frequent repeat customers (who in turn could optionally be quoted a lower rate than the average customer).

Auctions...such that discounted rates can be provided to certain designated preferred catalog customers. Thus, in this manner, loyal repeat customers could be quoted lower catalog **rates** on one or more **shipping** services offered as **compared** to the catalog rates quoted to less frequent repeat customers. Similarly, in this manner sellers can provide special contract rates to the exchange network for...

...disks, and remote hard drives. This system is utilized by the exchange 22 network 101 to store all shipping transaction data handled by the exchange **network** 101, such as catalog type **rate** tables for various **shipping** services offered by carrier users, auction bids, and pending electronic tender offers sent to carriers (as described below). Additionally, the database system 107 is adapted...one skilled in the art, preferably, multiple levels of preferred catalog customers can be employed such that loyal repeat customers could be quoted lower catalog **rates** on one or more **shipping** services offered as **compared** to the catalog rates quoted to less frequent repeat customers (who in turn could optionally be quoted a lower rate than the average customer).

Although...dollars per mile factor, a minimum rate, and/or a flat rate.

LTL rates are specified by carriers for each class in terms of a **minimum rate** and weight breaks. **Package rates** are specified for a carrier's weight breaks and charges for transportation within a particular zone. (The zones being defined by a particular carrier). Rail ...the present invention, the electronic market and related methods not only allows buyers and sellers to conduct auctions and to publish, search and review catalog **shipping rates** in a distributed **network** environment, but also enables the automatic 49 tendering of shipment requests (after the closing of auctions or after quoting of catalog rates) to carriers and...

11/9/77 (Item 7 from file: 148)

DIALOG(R)File 148:Gale Group Trade & Industry DB (c)2003 The Gale Group. All rts.
reserv.

09980351 SUPPLIER NUMBER: 20053706 (THIS IS THE FULL TEXT)

Closing the gaps: new enhancements to Internet technology bring parcel shippers closer to customers.(includes related articles on shippers and Web sites)

Schwartz, Beth M.

Transportation & Distribution, v38, n11, p68(3)

Nov, 1997

ISSN: 0895-8548

LANGUAGE: English

RECORD TYPE: Fulltext; Abstract

WORD COUNT: 2136

LINE COUNT: 00181

ABSTRACT: New software programs and hardware packages are extending the usefulness of the Internet for parcel shippers and their customers. Shippers can link their docks to carriers' databases, e-mail pre-advise notification documents and use 'address book' features that allow quick printing of labels and air waybills. Hardware packages offer security options for conducting business on the Internet, and increase storage memory for customer data.

TEXT:

Networking used to mean making business connections over cocktails. Clinking glasses and a nip of whiskey were virtual tools of the trade. Today, "networking" more likely refers to computer lines than lines at the bar. Strong business relationships are constructed and maintained over electronic wires. There are VANs (value-added networks), intranets, extranets and, of course, the Internet. Whether you're zipping along the left-hand lane or thumbing down the shoulder of "information superhighway," businesses are moving towards electronic network technology.

Recently, computer networks have garnered their fair share of attention within the parcel shipping industry. The buzz-word is "integration." It illustrates a growing need for communication links beyond the construct of Electronic Data Interchange (EDI). Parcel carriers and third party providers both are positioning themselves to take advantage of evolving networking technologies. The Internet is playing a key role. Recent announcements by both groups have focused on enhancements to Web platforms.

Granted, the Internet has its limitations. Connections can be slow; the amount and type of accessible data is limited; telephone lines can get interrupted; etc.

Regardless of its shortcomings, Internet technology illustrates an effort to expand the reach of EDI networks by opening internal information to all participants of the supply chain. Mark Rhoney, vice president of strategic marketing with United Parcel Service (UPS), underlines this point: "The Internet is, in my mind, a living example of the next generation of network technology and software. Whether or not the software of the future lives on the Internet isn't as important as the network technology it demonstrates."

Making the most of that technology requires an understanding of its benefits and limitations. The Internet can be a viable tool. But it is currently incapable of standing on its own. Using Internet applications in alliance with software and/or EDI can effectively expand the breadth of business relationships for parcel shippers.

Software versus the Internet

A few years ago, parcel carriers put PCs on the loading docks of their major shippers and handed out software programs by the fistful. Some of these PCs are stand-alone platforms (i.e. lacking connections to a network); some are hooked into the carrier's database. Both allow shippers access to shipping information. "Carrier-provided software is generally all the same," according to Bram Johnson, Director of Marketing with RPS. The software generates cost evaluations, prepares essential forms, and can create package bar codes. Johnson continues, "You can move big hunks of data around. (If on-line with the carrier,) you can trace by date, and if it turns out there are a thousand packages in shipment, you can download and manipulate that information."

"You can't do that on the Internet. I think our goal is for that piece of RPS supplied software to disappear. But the Net isn't there yet." To satisfy the needs of shippers using large amounts of data, software continues to be the key.

Carrier-supported software provides additional benefits for shippers. "It has no maintenance or upkeep costs for the customer," says UPS's Rhoney. "That's no-cost for the first installation or for improvements in functionality. This is of fundamental significance when it comes to international shipping because those programs are being continually updated." In other words, software is cheap, it's low-maintenance, and it works.

It's also limited in scope. A change of perspective regarding information sharing is running through the parcel shipping community. More and more, that perspective focuses on consignee needs. Johnson explains, "I really think the revolution will be to the consignee. Currently, the shipper knows everything--when they shipped it, what's in the box, who it's going to, and whether it shipped on time. It's getting the information from the shipper to the consignee and adding on carrier information that's increasingly important." If not connected to a VAN, consignees must go through customer service reps and reams of paper to obtain shipment information, often a frustrating and time-consuming process.

The Internet is a working solution to getting that information to consignees. "To get to the consignees, we've put information similar to what is found in our software out on the Web," says Alan Boehme, director of business planning with DHL Worldwide Express. "The Internet allows us to have more integration capabilities with our customers. We just have to be smart about how we take advantage of it."

The Net is a relatively cost effective means of hooking into a network system. Once you've invested in the hardware and gotten yourself an ISP (Internet Service Provider), relatively little else needs to be done. There's no tedious interfacing of incompatible systems. In addition to providing benefits to consignees, **smaller parcel** shippers can reap the **cost** benefits of utilizing **Internet** information bases, as well. NASSTRAC (National Small Shipments Traffic Council) intends to promote Internet use within the small shipping community during its annual education seminar. President Stu Slifkin advocates the Net as the potential enabler for smaller shippers: "Properly used, the **Internet** can reduce **costs** for all sides of the **shipping** community."

Despite its drawbacks, it is a working tool. It can be used with proficiency or inaccuracy. Tellingly, Internet applications are growing and improving at a head-spinning pace. To reap the most benefits with the fewest frustrations, Internet applications should be limited. **Tracking one shipment** at a time, or obtaining a few documents is a practical application. Downloading a glut of data is not. Following are some recent enhancements to Internet platforms which can improve the way parcel shippers do business.

Carrier supported web sites: a network of change

* DHL's Electronic Shipment Advisory is designed for use with DHL's EasyShip software package. EasyShip software allows shippers to electronically prepare the shipment form. Electronic Shipment Advisory, which is supported by AT&T's communication network, then sends the document via e-mail to the customer receiving shipment as a pre-advise notification.

A unique attribute of the e-mail document provides a direct link to DHL's tracking page on their web-site using the shipment air waybill number. The customer receives the electronic notice and can immediately click onto DHL's site and locate their package. For foreign shipments, the new service can translate an English message into the language of many destination countries. URL: www.dhl.com

* FedEx's interNetship has several new components. The site supports an "address book" capability which allows shippers to store information for 75 frequent customers to speed up printing of shipping labels and air waybills. Shippers can e-mail recipients through FedEx's network, transferring package information to customers. And the site now provides shipping options for the company's range of delivery programs, e.g. FedEx Priority Overnight, FedEx International Priority, FedEx Standard Overnight, etc. URL: www.fedex.com

* UPS recently announced a partnership with IBM and Lotus to incorporate electronic commerce formats within the UPS web site. Though the new package will initially support only UPS shipping and tracking components, UPS intends to incorporate their whole suite of offerings in the near future. URL: www.ups.com

* RPS has a couple of unique components on their web site. One is called "SPIF-Net:" Supplemental Package Information-Net. It assists small shippers by allowing the creation and transmission of a document formatted within EDI standards. "If a consignee demands the purchase order number in some kind of an EDI transmission, small shippers can now satisfy them," says Johnson. To assist consignees with liability issues, RPS also includes a digital image of the person's signature who signed for the package. URL: www.rps.com

Third-party solutions

Third party providers as well have caught onto the expanding emphasis on networks. Though carriers may currently provide the lion's share of Internet and software solutions for the parcel shipper, third party systems are a viable alternative for parcel shipping companies with high transportation costs. Again, strong networks reaching to the consignee are key, something which was not necessarily generated by EDI. "Transportation systems are typically closed," according to Michael Bireley with Cass Logistics. "Within them, information is only available to the logistics and transportation groups. For the transportation and parcel industries to take their next leap forward into a commodity-marketplace arena, those systems need to open up."

To pry open these systems, third parties are moving into Internet capabilities focusing on consignee needs. For those companies with high transportation costs who are prepared to invest in a viable, robust system, here are two worth investigating:

- * Cass Logistics Software has partnered with IBM to provide a software/hardware solution designed to help small and medium-sized businesses maximize their transportation pricing systems via the Internet. Cass's software program is called TMS-Net and is designed to run on IBM's newly released AS/400e series.

"TMS-Net allows users to profile transportation cost at any point along the Supply Chain Management profile" says Bireley, "from order entry through distribution through reconciliation of transportation cost." The software handles any pricing thrown at it. To meet the needs of international consignees, the software deals in just about any type of currency. It can convert currencies and allows the user to choose a currency based on current exchange rates.

IBM's AS/400e series maximizes the software's potential. AS/400e is a newly released hardware package designed for Internet applications. It includes extensive security options along with increased storage and memory space designed specifically to take advantage of conducting business over the Net. Cass Logistics is so excited with this new IBM series, they have no plans to commit the TMS-Net software to any other platform. Bireley says, "This is the most progressive platform IBM has today. They have nothing even close to this Internet line that addresses client-server requirements."

- * Varsity Logistics has designed a complete software package for shippers demanding a comprehensive supply chain management tool. Varsity's software goes beyond the shippers' dock to link with major carriers' databases in an EDI environment. Varsity's track record is a plus: they were the first company approved and certified for hookup into carriers' databases. The Varsity system can accommodate a variety of needs from preparing and sending an ASN, to generating carrier-specific bar code labels, to communicating shipment status information across international boundaries in one of five languages.

The scope of the software is expanding. "Previously, we focused a lot more on carrier requirements," says Carol Lee, President of Varsity. "Now we're getting into consignee requirements." To better meet those requirements, Varsity will move their program onto an Internet platform.

This fervor for Internet capabilities doesn't render EDI obsolete. Putting transportation pricing and routing information out on the Web illustrates the changing nature of parcel shipping. Customer service equals competitiveness. "This is the point of competition," says DHL's Boehme. "The Internet allow us to have a lot more integration capabilities with our customers, much more so than our software-only provided by a transportation company." Make strong business connections over networks, then toast your savvy with a nice glass of whiskey.

RELATED ARTICLE: Fast facts about parcel carrier's web sites:

- * FedEx's home page averages 1.4 million hits per month; over 500,000 customers use Internet shipping tools

- * The UPS website currently averages 2 million hits per day

- * DHL anticipates delivering between 30,000 and 40,000 pre-advise messages daily using their Electronic Shipment Advisory

The UPS strike posed a challenge to smaller parcel shipping companies to pick up the slack. Transportation software played a big role in determining success levels. Force Transportation of Pasadena, TX reaped the benefits of a solid information system. Force operates 40 vehicles under 50 employees. Using a system designed by ANSCAR out of Glendale, CA, Force successfully met the demands of an instantaneous 25% increase in service loads. Co-owner Randall Force says, "Without our computerized dispatching system I probably would have had to turn down 50% of the UPS overload." For information on ANSCAR, circle 250

For more information on these products and services, circle the appropriate numbers on the Reader Services Card in this issue.

DHL Electronic Shipment Advisory: circle 243

FedEx interNetship: circle 244

UPS electronic commerce: circle 245

RPS SPIF-Net: circle 246

Cass Logistics TMS-Net: circle 247

IBM AS/400e series: circle 248

Varsity Logistics software: circle 249

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